U.S. Department of Labor   Office or the Assistant Secretary for
Veterans' Employment and Training
Washington, D.C. 20210

DIRECTOR'S MEMORANDUM: **16-04**, *Revision 1*

FOR: REGIONAL ADMINISTRATORS AND DIRECTORS FOR
                                            VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

FROM: GORDON J. BURKE, JR
                                            Director, Operations and Programs

SUBJECT: VETS' Operations and Programs Activity Report (VOPAR)
                                            Operations Guide

NOTICE: As VOPAR evolves and additional structure and upgrades are built into the system the Operations Guide Director's Memorandum (DM) will be revised to reflect any and all changes. ***The first revision/change to the Operations Guide DM will be entered in*** *bold red italicized* ***font for easy recognition.*** Subsequent revisions will be in entered in other indicated colors. The DM number will reflect the revision number, as well. If the revisions become too numerous or large, a new DM will be written and issued at that time under a new DM number.

I. Purpose: To provide to all authorized VOPAR users:

- A realistic view of the capabilities, expectations and long-term objectives for the VOPAR system;
- The framework within which it will operate,
- General and specific user responsibilities, and
- Planned enhancements to the system.

II. Overview: The Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA) was enacted to promote a new focus on improving program performance and to provide greater accountability for results within the Federal government. The legislation required agencies to develop measurable goals for all federal programs and to report actual results.

GPRA states that *"Managers, through the implementation of comprehensive performance management systems, are to be supported in their efforts to manage their programs to maximize performance, minimize costs, and achieve the desired results"*. In this respect, VOPAR is an integral component of the VETS' Performance Management System (VPMS). Its purpose is to provide raw and formulated program performance data for VETS' managers at all levels.

III. <u>The VOPAR Performance Data System</u>: VOPAR is a web-based data system that provides managers with a single source for all VETS' programmatic performance data (historical, current and planned) in support of the Department of Labor's (DOL) Strategic Plan.

VOPAR data, coupled with the guidance and information contained in the DOL Strategic Plan, Performance Budget, and VETS' Performance Management Review System (VPMRS) allows managers at all levels to develop an effective and customized performance management system that promotes accountability for results.

Inclusive performance data is formulated to help managers assess their level of attainment for the goals and objectives that agency programs should accomplish.

VOPAR is being constructed in phases as funding becomes available and various aspects of Public Law (P.L.) 107-288 (Jobs for Veterans Act) are implemented. Phase I will include data from all goaled programs listed below. Phase II, which will enhance and expand overall system capabilities, will be added to VOPAR in Fiscal Years (FYs) 2004-2005.

IV. <u>VOPAR Performance Budget System</u>: In the near future VOPAR will support the further development and full implementation of the VETS' performance budget (integrated annual performance plan and annual budget). Included in this system are:

- Planned versus actual performance goal attainment;
- Formulated output (performance activity) measures data to facilitate the relationships between dollars spent and results obtained;
- All budget documents/data currently provided by field staff to the National Office on a quarterly basis; and
- Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) veterans' unemployment data matrix on a rolling monthly average for each state. Managers can use this data as a "leading indicator" of performance.

Both performance data and budget data will be formulated to facilitate the development of a performance driven budget - not only in the programmatic areas, but also in salaries and expenses (S&E).

V. <u>VOPAR System Structure</u>: The VOPAR system is a web-based application that can be accessed from any computer with an Internet connection and web browser software. The Phase I –**II** configuration is designed to:

- Receive data;
- Accommodate editing of entered data;
- Store and display data;
- Formulate data for results; and
- Provide designed reports for selected timeframes for the following VETS' programs:

- Transition Assistance Program (TAP);
- *Overseas Transition Assistance Program (OTAP)*
- Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment (VR&E);
- Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP); and
- Veterans' Workforce Investment Program (VWIP)

As a priority, Phase II will incorporate additional program data (coordinated with program leads, National Veterans' Training Institute (NVTI) and the Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP)/Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) Expert Cluster (DLEC)):

- (DVOP/LVER); *(has been incorporated into VOPAR)*
- Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) and Veterans' Preference (VP); and *(will be incorporated in FY 2005)*

VI. <u>General User Guidance:</u> There are currently six different user levels built into the system:

- VETS' field staff (state level)
- *Grantees – HVRP and VWIP*
- Director for Veterans' Employment and Training - Grants Officer's Technical Representative (DVET-GOTR)
- Regional staff (Regional Administrator for Veterans' Employment and Training (RAVET) / Veterans' Programs Specialist (VPS)/Management Services Assistant (MSA)
- National office staff (Executive staff, managers and program leads)
- Administrator (primary and *HVRP-VWIP*)

VOPAR is divided into program modules that will allow users to:

- Enter, edit, search for, validate and view data;
- Download and attach narratives and other support documents to reports;
- View reports; and
- Print reports

All users must have a valid username and password to enter the VOPAR system. The VOPAR Administrator has the responsibility to issue usernames, passwords and keyed access codes to all authorized users. Username – password – access code combinations will allow the user to open and use only those areas designated by the assigned access code.

All authorized users can view National rollup and National report data for each of the programs within the system.

Requests for issue or reissue of a username/password *combination* will be accomplished via e-mail to the VOPAR Administrator: benson-ronald@dol.gov or the *Administrator for HVRP-VWIP*: mclaughlin-kristine@dol.gov …Subject: Request for (or) Reissue of Username/Password. The authorized requestor (see above) should provide a brief explanation for the need to reissue either or both username and/or password.

Authorized users are able to change/customize their passwords once they've initially gained access into the VOPAR system.

VII. <u>Specific User Guidance</u>:

A. <u>Data Entry/Data Editing</u>: Designated field staff users and contract staff will enter and edit performance data for TAP, OTAP, VR&E, HVRP and VWIP for four-quarter (December, March, June, September) reporting periods. VOPAR will arrange the quarters into program year (PY) [July through June] and/or fiscal year (FY) [October through September] formats. *VOPAR will display the quarters as periods of performance (period ending December 31, 2004, etc.) on the HVRP-VWIP data entry pages to preclude confusion to the individual entering the data whether it be a fiscal or program year quarter.*

DVOP/LVER and USERRA/VP performance data are automatically downloaded into VOPAR from DVOP/LVER Information Management System (DLIMS II) and the USERRA Information Management System (UIMS). <u>Therefore, no entry or edit for performance data is required at the VOPAR level.</u>

B. <u>Timeframe for Data Entry/Data Editing</u>: Users will have *fifty (50) days from the end of the reporting period* to enter or edit data for that reporting period. The modules will time- out on the technical report due date. (Example: if a reporting period ends on June 30th -- reports are due on the 20th day of August. The system will not readily accept data or allow editing of already entered data after the time-out date.)

> <u>Note 1</u>: *It is important to understand that once a report has been finalized and forwarded to the appropriate level of management, there can be no additional information added or edited that would require the report to be reaccomplished.*

> <u>Note 2</u>: *The VOPAR Administrator can grant - on a valid case-by-case basis - authorization to individual users to enter additional data or edit already entered data after a timed-out reporting period. This will only be done if the data entry or edit will significantly change the activity outcome for the reporting period just completed and the request is from the affected program manager.*

VIII. <u>VOPAR General User Guide</u>: *The <u>VOPAR User Guide</u> can be accessed from the index screen in VOPAR by clicking on the User Guide hot button found on the upper right corner of the page. The User Guide is formatted by chapter pertinent to each performance program and type of user accessing the system, and provides step-by-step instructions for each level of use.*

IX. __Roles and Responsibilities for Data Entry, Edit, Search and View__: Individual roles and responsibilities that determine procedures to use are as follows:

Field Staff Users: The field staff (state) user level includes:

- Directors for Veterans' Employment and Training (DVET);
- Designated Assistant Directors (ADVET) when and where assigned; and
- Veterans' Program Assistants (VPA).

The VPA will generally:

- Enter and edit VR&E and TAP performance data for the state, and
- Enter and edit the "planned" performance and quarterly expenditure data for the HVRP and/or VWIP grant(s) issued within the state.

The DVET or a designated ADVET (in the absence of the DVET) is responsible for validation and verification of manually entered performance and expenditure data entered into VOPAR.

> *Note 1: DV/LV data is imported from DLIMS II and will be validated by the Employment and Training Administration (ETA).*
>
> *Note 2: USERRA and VP data is imported from UIMS and will be validated by the Atlanta UIMS Regional Lead Center*

Field staff users will be able to access only their individual state module for performance and quarterly expenditure data entry/edit. They will be able to view the program rollups and National Reports for all programmatic performance data.

Director for Veterans' Employment and Training/Grants Officer's Technical Representative (DVET/GOTR) User:. The DVET/GOTR will validate and verify the correctness of the HVRP/VWIP grantee's submissions. The DVET/GOTR will validate and verify the correctness of all TAP, VR&E, HVRP and VWIP performance and quarterly expenditure data entered into the system. The DVET/GOTR will not have the responsibility to validate and verify DV/LV, USERRA/VP or OTAP data entered into the system.

Regional User: Regional users will be able to view all program performance data from each state within the region, the regional rollup and the National rollup and reports for all program performance data. Regional users are not authorized to enter or edit performance data. If a regional user questions data in a particular program he/she must contact the applicable field staff user/DVET-GOTR for clarification and edit as needed.

National User: National users will be able to view all entered performance data, regardless of program or level, but are not authorized to enter or edit performance data. If a National user questions data in a particular program he/she must contact the applicable RAVET for clarification and edit by the pertinent field staff user, as needed.

Grantees: Grantees – Contract Staff will only enter, edit and view performance and training data pertinent to their grant(s). ***Grantees will enter, edit and view actual performance data pertinent only to their grant(s).*** Overseas TAP data entry/edit and validation/ verification is currently under review and negotiation. It is expected that contract staff will enter OTAP data, which will be validated and verified by Family Support Services staff at the individual OTAP military base.

Administrator/Back-up Administrator: The VOPAR Administrator/Back-up Administrator will:
- Enter;
- Delete;
- Edit;
- Search for;
- View; and
- Issue usernames and passwords for all authorized users.
- Insert new TAP sites and delete those no longer in operation (FY 2005)

 The Administrator/Back-up Administrator will also have access to view all entered performance data, regardless of program or level. The Administrator/Back-up Administrator is/are not authorized to enter or edit any programmatic performance data.

X. Program Performance Data Entry:

VR&E: (during the reporting quarter)

- Referred - job ready veterans from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) VR&E referred to the Public Labor Exchange (PLE) State Workforce Agencies (SWA) for employment services;
- Registered - of those referred, the number registered with SWA/PLE for employment services;
- Registered Carryover – registered veterans carried over from the previous fiscal year and entered in the first quarter of a new fiscal year only;
- Entered Employment - of those registered, the number who entered employment;
- Discontinued by VA – of those registered, the number who were discontinued from the program by the VA-VR&E officer; and
- Average Entry Hourly Wage – optional entry

TAP: (during the reporting quarter by workshop location)

Number of:	Number of:
- Workshops - Military Retirees - Military Separatees - Military Spouses - Total Participants - DTAP Participants - Navy Participants - Army Participants - Air Force Participants - Marine Corps Participants - Coast Guard Participants	- Workshop participants with less than 90 days before discharge - Workshop participants with more than 90 days before discharge - Days per workshop that DV/LV staff provided facilitation - Days per workshop that Federal staff provided facilitation - Days per workshop that contractor staff provided facilitation - Days per workshop that when actually employed staff provided facilitation

Overseas TAP: (during the reporting quarter by workshop location)

Number of:	Number of:
- Workshops - Military Retirees - Military Separatees - Military Spouses - Total Participants - DTAP Participants - Navy Participants - Army Participants - Air Force Participants - Marine Corps Participants	- Workshop participants with less than 90 days before discharge - Workshop participants with more than 90 days before discharge - Days per workshop that Federal staff provided facilitation - Days per workshop that contractor staff provided facilitation

HVRP "Planned" and "Actuals" Performance and Training: ("Planned" numbers are a one time entry at the beginning of the grant period or a modification, if applicable. Performance data "Actuals" are entered for the reporting quarter for each active grant)

Number of:	Number who received:
Performance: - Assessments - Participants/Enrollments - Placed in Transit or Permanent Housing	Training: - Classroom Training - On-The-Job Training - Remedial Education

• Direct Placement unsubsidized employment • Assisted Placement unsubsidized employment • Combined Placements • Cost Per Placement • Retained Employment – 90 Days • Retained Employment – 180 Days • Placement Rate Unsubsidized Employment • Average Hourly Wage @ Placement	• Vocational Counseling • Pre-Employment Services • Occupational Skills Training • Other Work Acclimation Training • Other Individual Job Search • Other Supportive Services • Other Resume Assistance

HVRP "Planned" and "Actuals" Quarterly Expenditures: ("Planned" grant period expenditure is a one time entry at the beginning of the grant period or a modification, if applicable. Quarterly expenditure"Actuals" are entered for the reporting quarter for each active grant)

"Planned"	"Actual"
• Grantee planned expenditures for life of the grant (basically one time entry)	• Total cumulative expenditures for each reporting quarter

VWIP "Planned" and "Actuals" Performance and Training: ("Planned" numbers are a one time entry at the beginning of the grant period or a modification, if applicable. Performance data "Actuals" are entered for the reporting quarter for each active grant)

Number of:	Number who received:
Performance: • Assessments • Participants/Enrollments • Employment Development Plan • Job Placement Services • Follow-up Services • Placements	Training: • Classroom Training • On-The-Job Training • Remedial Education • Literacy Bilingual Training • Institutional Skills Training • Occupational Skills Training • Onsite Industry Specific Training • Customized Training • Apprenticeship Training • Upgrading or Retraining • Supportive Services • Other

VWIP "Planned" and "Actuals" Quarterly Expenditures: ("Planned" grant period expenditure is a one time entry at the beginning of the grant period or a modification, if applicable. Quarterly expenditure"Actuals" are entered for the reporting quarter for each active grant)

"Planned"	"Actual"
• Grantee planned expenditures for life of the grant (basically one time entry)	• Total cumulative expenditures for each reporting quarter

X.   Automated Notification System:

VRE Data Entered Message

For the quarter ending September 30th, 2004, actual performance data was entered for South Carolina.

TAP Data Entered Message

This message is sent when TAP data has been entered.

For the quarter ending September 30th, 2004, actual performance data was entered for Seattle Coast Guard (WA).

Missing Data Message

The administrator sends this message. When they run the "Data Entry Check" for a particular quarter and then press the button to send the email. The message goes from the DVET to the grantee with a copy to the DVET.

Sent: Sun 1/2/2005 8:46 PM
To: bob.smithr@dir.state.com
Cc: karrh.thomas@dol.gov
Subject: Missing HVRP/VWIP Data - Period Ending September 30, 2004

For the quarter ending September 30, 2004, actual performance data has not been entered for the following grant(s):

Grant	Grantee
E-9-5-2-XXXX (FY2004 - Time Plus Money Extension)	*State-VWIP*

Please log on at http://vopar.heitechservices.com and enter the data as soon as possible.

Should you have any questions pertinent to the request for data entry, please contact your Grants Officer Technical Representative (GOTR), Thomas Karrh.
Performance Notification

This is the performance notification. It is sent if a user enters or edits quarterly performance figures and there is at least one category for which the goal was not at least 85% attained or the cost goal was exceeded by 15%.

Message
From: john.doer@test.org
Sent: Thu 1/6/2005 10:41 PM
To: smith.jane@dol.gov
Subject: Performance Notification for Grant E-9-5-4-XXXX (Bogus Company Training)

Actual performance data has been entered for the quarter ending September 30, 2004.   The goal was not achieved for the following performance categories:

Performance Category	Planned	Actual	Percentage
Participants Enrolled	*21*	*9*	*43%*
Placed in Transitional/Permanent Housing	*16*	*8*	*50%*
Assisted Placements	*4*	*0*	*0%*
Classroom Training	*7*	*4*	*57%*
Occupational Skills Training	*5*	*3*	*60%*
Pre-employment Services	*21*	*9*	*43%*
Case Management	*21*	*9*	*43%*
Job Search Assistance	*21*	*9*	*43%*
Counseling/Vocational Guidance	*21*	*9*	*43%*

XII. <u>Recommended Enhancements For Phase II and Beyond</u>: In FYs 2005-*2006,* VOPAR capability will be enhanced with additional modules of information. This will be VOPAR – Phase II/III.

A. VETS' Managers and Staff Suggested Front-end Enhancements Include:

- Importing the DV/LV and USERRA/VP program data into the system and formulating it the same as VR&E, TAP and HVRP in Phase I; **(ongoing)**

- The capability for RAVETs and DVETs to view a national overview of all included data reports – not just for their areas of responsibility; **(ongoing)**

- A prompt that identifies regional staff when a narrative report is required from a region based on an inability (for whatever reason) to meet assigned program performance goals. The narrative will outline strategies for improvement and actions taken to ensure full success; **(ongoing)**

- Additional Transition Assistance Program (TAP) data currently formatted on Excel spreadsheets and collected on a monthly basis. The data needs to be rolled into a comprehensive quarterly data report; **(complete for domestic TAP)** *(ongoing for overseas TAP)*

- TAP Overseas formatted the same as the basic TAP program; **(ongoing)**

- A display of total grant funding and percentage of remaining grant funding in the expenditure category in the HVRP module; **(complete)**

- Built-in notification system that will:

  - Notify the DVET/GOTR once a grantee has entered their required data into the VOPAR system
  - Notify the grantee that a change was made or that they need to make a change. (Often the VPAs expend a lot of time trying to reach grantees to notify them of the above mentioned information)
  - Notify the RAVETs that all states have submitted their TAP, VR&E, HVRP and VWIP quarterly reports data *(complete)*

- Reports arranged by 1st Quarter, 2nd Quarter, 3rd Quarter, 4th Quarter and Final. Also include a 90 day Retention Report and a 180 day Longitudinal Report for those programs that require that data; **(ongoing)**

- The capability to attach report support documents, i.e. Standard Form 269, Onsite Grant Monitoring Reviews and Quarterly reviews; *(complete)*

- Enhanced printing capability of all or selected elements of the system; **(ongoing)**

- The Annual Work Plan (AWP). Currently the AWP is in an Excel spreadsheet housed on the VETS' O: drive-shared directory. It is difficult to access from the field and difficult to maintain; **(reserved)**

- A module of hyperlinked directory of Veterans' Program Letters, ASVET Memorandums and Director's Memorandums**; (reserved)**

- A module of pertinent DV/LV staffing information by State and Region; and rollup; **(reserved)**

- In the rollup reports the raw number target for each individual program performance goal , where applicable. The report formats currently show only percentage of attainment. (rate) **(ongoing)**

    B.   HeiTECH Services Suggested Enhancements to Improve Functionality and Usability:

    Front-end Optimizations**:**

- Fully extend the validation to all of the admin section; **(ongoing)**
- Include Pie Charts and Graphs for reports; **(reserved)**
- Develop a notifications system; *(complete)*
- Make more dropdown list boxes for administrative sections; **(ongoing)**
- Revisit USERRA/VP (are we doing this the most efficient way?) **(ongoing**)
- Implement DVOP/LVER functionality; *(complete***)**
- Implement simple printing mechanism for all data pages; **(reserved)**
- Feedback page to allow users to offer feedback on the VOPAR application; **(reserved)**
- Program Administration for each Program Manager (HVRP, TAP, VR&E, etc); **(reserved – in discussion)**
- Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) Link, self help; and **(reserved)**
- Administration function for adding and removing TAP-site military bases. *(complete)*

Additional data elements and functional capability can and will be added as determined by need and cost. The enhancements listed above as **(ongoing)** will be completed and integrated into the system after the June 9, 2004 rollout of VOPAR. VOPAR users will be notified as enhancements are complete and integrated.

XIII. Attachment: VOPAR General User Guide

XIV. Expiration Date: When superseded